

CAB completes safety training

By Spc. Creighton Holub
CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

The 4th Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade strives to complete the mission while keeping safety in the forefront of a Soldier's mind.

Part of the safety mindset is practicing safe habits during combat, in garrison and even at home – another is teaching the Iron Eagle Soldiers how to be safe.

The brigade's Soldiers recently completed their quarterly safety stand down day as each battalion conducted safety training with special emphasis on “The 100 days of Summer,” home safety and hazards particular to the aviation trade.

“If you ask the typical guy if he knows how to operate a fire extinguisher, he will answer yes – but he has never actually picked one up,” said Sgt. 1st Class Clark Herring, safety noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company. “Practicing with a fire extinguisher is something everybody needs to do.”

Fort Hood regulations prevent the military from using fire extinguishers except for actual emergencies, he explained. However, Soldiers may purchase their own fire extinguishers and practice using them off post.

While fire is a life-threatening concern, the safety instructors taught about an aviation-specific threat: FOD, which stands for both foreign object damage and foreign object debris.

To most people, a small rock or screw on the side of the road is not a concern, said Herring. However, a similar small rock or screw can be blown into the air and injure

personnel or damage equipment when helicopters take off and land. This is a threat to everyone who is in or around an operating aircraft.

“There is a lack of knowing what FOD is or what it can do,” Herring explained.

“People (think) the rocks on the flight line are supposed to be out there. Crew chiefs and pilots put their lives in the hands of the mechanics and anybody that comes onto that airfield. What they might consider not very important, we consider life threatening.”

Another life-threatening safety issue covered was water safety. The Iron Eagle Brigade safety team went the extra mile for its boating safety class by bringing local park rangers and a jet ski to the brigade headquarters’ class.

“We emphasize they have lifejackets if they’re going to be out on boats,” said Murray McCarley, a local park ranger, about Soldiers enjoying the nearby lakes. “They need to be prepared by learning how to swim and to watch their friends and kids if they are on the lake.”

McCarley, who serves as a natural resources specialist and is one of two U.S. Army Corps of Engineers park rangers at Belton and Stillhouse Hollow Lakes, led the water and boating safety classes.

“If a storm is coming and filling your boat up with water, you’re not going to have the time to find the lifejacket under your seat,” McCarley added. “It’s better if you’re sitting on it or have it on you. Things can happen very quickly when you’re on the water.”

The park rangers involved the Soldiers with hands-on training during the class. They created a scenario in which Soldiers rushed to put on different sized lifejackets – which fit improperly.

“If it doesn’t fit you, it’s not going to save your life,” said Scott Blank, one of the park rangers at the class. “Spend the few extra dollars to have something that will save your life. Lifejackets have a Coast Guard-approved label, telling you what sizes are for kids. The label also tells you the jackets weight and chest size limits.”

The emphasis of the training was to help Soldiers avoid, prevent and survive accidents to fight for America another day.

“We’re part of the Army, and we especially want the Soldiers to be safe when they come out to the lake,” McCarley concluded.



Safety day.

Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, try on lifejackets during a boat safety demonstration with Murray McCarley and Scott Blank, both of whom are U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Rangers. The Soldiers were provided different sized lifejackets to illustrate the need to purchase properly fitting lifejackets before reaching the water.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Park ranger instructs

Murray McCarley, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger, reviews the variety of lifejacket styles and how to properly fit and wear them with Soldiers from Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. The Iron Eagle Brigade recently completed its quarterly safety training day.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

